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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

Volume 10 Number 3

EDITORIALS

The San Francisco Conference

On paper the San Francisco Conference has greatly improved the character of the United Nations organization, first outlined at Dumbarton Oaks. In reality the conference was unable to solve the main problem which confronted it, which was the establishment of a genuinely mutual accord between Russia and the west.

On paper the character of the charter was improved because the small nations made themselves heard and because general public discussion served to bring a greater degree of moral idealism into the charter. The power of the general assembly has been considerably enlarged and the veto power of the great nations has been slightly abridged. A preamble has been added which gives the charter a moral meaning which it did not have in the original document. An international bill of rights has also been added, the significance of which has been lauded by all international idealists, despite the fact that there is no international sovereignty which could enforce its provisions upon any constituent states. All in all the instrument which has come out of San Francisco deserves all the praise which the hopeful have bestowed upon it, provided you do not look too much beneath the surface.

Under the surface of this document the political realities are such as to give little assurance for the future. The simple fact is that no significant forms of mutual accord between Russia and the west have been reached though fairly plausible formulae have been found to cover up that fact. Hundreds of observers among the "consultants" at San Francisco who have kept their various constituent bodies informed on the developments of the conference, have made their reports of the conference without once penetrating to the realities under the conference verbiage.

Thus for instance the conference was for a time in conflict on the problem of trusteeship. The Russians demanded that the trustees of backward regions should be committed to the proposition that the purpose of trusteeship was the ultimate independence of these regions. This was very smart of the Russians because they used almost the identical phrases, and certainly the very ideas, which American liberalism, Christian and secular, had advanced. Our religious delegation did in fact address a communication to Mr. Stettinius expressing embarassment over the fact that the Russians, rather than we, were assuming leadership in championing the rights of the backward regions. But the

communication did not mention, and its authors may not have apprehended, what was actually at stake in this issue.

The stake was the control of the Pacific. We were determined to have as many of the captured islands as possible as our outright possession and to hold the others under a form of trusteeship which would not interfere too much with our strategic plans. Actually the provisions of trusteeship are so loose that the whole scheme of trusteeship will prove to be more of a dishonest pretension than the mandate system in the old League of Nations. The Russians know that we have these strategic plans in the Pacific for other reasons than our fear of Japan; for we intend to destroy the power of Japan, root and branch. Therefore the Russians are trying to prevent us from securing as absolute a hold on the Pacific bases as the formula of trusteeship, which we proposed, allows. The Russians are not very plausible proponents of the international idealism which their formula of trusteeship implied; for they will hold the whole of eastern Europe under a tutelage, which will be qualified to only the slightest degree by the provisions of the San Francisco charter. But it is actually idle to measure the relative virtues and pretensions of Russia and the western powers in regard to this matter. The important fact about the whole struggle was that it revealed a lack of mutual trust between Russia and the west.

In the same way the struggle over the problem how the Pan-American regional system should be related to the world system, betrayed a lack of mutual trust. We were anxious to devise a system which would give the budding communist movements in South America as little support from Russia as possible. The Russians sought on the other hand to discredit this regional system in the name of the world system, despite the fact that they have a regional system of their own which threatens the world system. There is little to choose between our pretensions and those of the Russians in regard to this matter, though the Russians were much shrewder, even while they were less diplomatic than we, in advancing their claims. Our State department placed itself in a ridiculous position when it allowed Argentine's admission to the conference to become a symbol of our position. But these relative advantages and disadvantages pale into insignificance beside the more important fact that every action of the conference proved how little mutual confidence between Russia and the west really exists. The Russian attitude toward Poland certainly contributed as much as any of our mistakes to accentuate, rather than mitigate, this mutual mistrust.

The final outcome of the conference is that a system of world security has been devised on paper which does not hide too successfully that each of the great powers is to control a part of the world. Even this "sphere of influence" solution has not been achieved with complete success. None of the great powers are quite certain that one of the other powers may not poach in the preserves assigned to the other.

Such are the power-political realities of the San Francisco settlement. They do not fill the apprehensive and yet hopeful soul with too much confidence in the future. They have in fact prompted something akin to despair

among some thoughtful observers though such despair is premature. There may still be a possibility of gradually working out better schemes of mutual accord.

In the light of these facts the religious interpretations of the conference have been unbelievably naive. We have been favored from time to time by estimates from our Federal Council delegation of the achievements of the conference. In these estimates the "six pillars of peace" of the Federal Council's Commission have been used as a yardstick of the achievements of the conference almost as if they were some kind of ultimate standard, some new decalogue. The various provisions of the conference dealing with international law, ideals of international justice, etc., have been carefully measured against these ideal standards. Plus and minus marks were indicated with careful discrimination. But nothing was said about the power-political realities which underlay all these words. One blue-print was compared with another. But the fact that no foundation for an international security system had been laid was not fully comprehended. There was no desire on the part of our observers to fool us. They had merely been so preoccupied with the blue-prints that they had not bothered to look too carefully at the actual bricks which had been laid at San Francisco.

Russia and the West

Despite the failure of San Francisco to establish a genuine system of mutual security we do not hold with that other school of idealists who insinuate that San Francisco was a gigantic fraud. The liberal mind vacillates between obscuring the moral ambiguities in politics in order to preserve its optimism; and laying those ambiguities bare in order to celebrate its incorruptibility.

The real fact is that San Francisco did surprisingly well with the historic resources available. The historic situation is that the chasm between the west and Russia has not been bridged. The bad manners of the Russians, their arrest of the Polish leaders, their refusal to abide by the Yalta agreement in constituting the Polish government, their implicit support of Marshal Tito's high handed actions, will be regarded by many as the primary cause of the lack of accord between Russia and the west. It is a fact that Russia makes it very difficult for all of us who believe that we must arrive at a lasting accord with her if peace is to be preserved.

On the other hand it must be remembered that the Russians have not forgotten Munich, which meant to them that we were quite willing to divert the Nazi beast to Russian lands. Nor are they incognizant of the fact that elements in our high naval and army command are quite obviously concerned with strategic problems, having to do with a possible war with Russia. We do not say that our military people are nefarious in making such plans. It is the business of the military to be prepared for all contingencies; and it is the fate of the military mind to accentuate the perils, for which it prepares, by its obvious preparations. This is as true of the Russian strategic plans in eastern Europe as of our plans. We are, in other words already involved in the vicious circle which leads to war if it can not be broken. We have only minimal agree-

ments with the Russians on how Germany is to be governed; and we evidently have no agreement with them at all on how Europe or Asia are to be organized. We have, in short, no secure foundation for peace, though war is precluded for some years to come by the exhaustion of all the nations.

Whether the chasm between ourselves and Russia can be bridged will depend less upon the San Francisco instrument than upon the way a dozen immediate political and economic problems are solved within the next years and decades. We are embarassed in solving our problems with Russia partly because Russia is the fatherland of the most potent political religion of our day and is therefore held in either religious veneration or religious abhorrence by large sections of the population. The veneration and the abhorrence are equal sources of moral confusion in assessing the issues between ourselves and Russia. The religious devotees cast suspicion upon even the most justified concessions to Russia. For their advocacy of such concessions gives conservatives the pretext for discounting the validity of those concessions, since everyone knows that the religious devotees of Russia would justify even the most absurd concessions.

Those who are filled with a religious hatred of Russia, on the other hand, demand that we oppose every Russian policy even though such a course will obviously have war as the ultimate consequence. Frequently this religious hatred of Russia is compounded with pacifistic liberalism; but the peril of war does not seem to mitigate its fury. Those of us who are willing to make many concessions to Russia for the sake of an ultimate peace are accused of appeasement.

In defense of our policy let us make it quite clear what the stakes in this issue are. We refused to appease the Nazis because Nazism was an attack upon the remnants of a civilization. We have to "appease" the Russians because a war with Russia means a civil war within the boundaries of civilization. Whatever the evils of Russian totalitarianism, it nevertheless belongs to civilization. It can boast of some moral and political achievements which the western world has been unable to accomplish. It has on the other hand sacrificed some cherished political values as the price of these achievements, to which the western world still rightly clings. Whatever the merits or demerits on the one side or the other, a war between us would be spiritually a different matter than a war between ourselves and the Nazis. It would be a civil war within civilization. Physically it would finally reduce the whole of our civilization to chaos. Politically it would result in social chaos in many western nations.

Spiritually it would lead to a divided mind because it could not be fought with that sense of a just cause which the western world had in the present struggle.

The stakes are, in other words, very very high. We will have to be prepared to be outraged by many things which Russia does in eastern Europe. We will have to meet Russia with more creative economic programs on the continent if we want to prevent the whole of Europe from falling into Russian hands. We will have to think an act beyond the presuppositions of a plutocracy if we are to be saved from another war. The stakes are so high that we may learn to do all these things. Yet it is possible that we will fail.

The Spiritual Problem of the Coming Decades

A young soldier, seriously maimed in the fighting in the Pacific, told us something of the comrades he had left dead upon the beaches of a Pacific Island. He spoke of the hours of discussion they had had on the kind of peace which would justify the sacrifices of the war. He felt that the peace which is about to be made would not be good enough to satisfy the hopes of his dead comrades. Yet he also realized that the failure of the peace could not be attributed simply to this or that nation or to this or that statesman. He recognized that we lack the historic resources for a really creative peace.

That young soldier with his sense of obligation toward dead comrades and his sense of political realism symbolized for us the spiritual problem of our generation. We are suspended between an urgent necessity and an impossibility. We must have the kind of world organization which we can not get. We can not have world security without much more abridgement of national sovereignty than either the great or the small nations are willing to grant. The world community requires a minimal amount of common cultural traditions which it lacks. The nations of the world should have regarded this war as a divine judgment upon their moral self-sufficiency. But they have not been deeply touched. One begins to wonder whether nations as such can repent, considering that repentance even for individuals is very difficult. May it be necessary to reduce the whole of our civilization to ashes before we learn to solve the problem of community on its global level?

Living in such an age as ours we will be assailed by two opposite temptations. The one will be to develop a religious faith and a spiritual attitude for which the responsibilities of building a community of nations is completely irrelevant. This is the temptation of the flight into eternity. It is the temptation to live a life of prayer in which the petition: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" has no place. The other temptation is to elaborate historic illusions which cover up the tragic realities of our world and make them appear more hopeful than they are.

We must resist both temptations if a vital spiritual life is to be developed in such an era as this. We will find that however narrow the choices there are always significant choices, to be made in trying to establish the community. We must, for instance, resist American irresponsibility and isolationism all the more because the disillusioning realities will tend to support the isolationist mood. We must strive for social justice in a technical society all the more because the failure to achieve security for the masses within modern industry will aggravate every other problem of our civilization. We must be prompted neither by our fears nor by our hopes but by our responsibilities.

We must adjust ourselves to the tragic fact that the war must be justified primarily in negative terms. There was no other way of destroying the peril of tyranny to civilization. That does remain a justification, even though the victory does not insure the solution of our international problem. It will require decades and centuries to solve that problem even in minimal terms.

Post-War Unemployment

The problem of unemployment is upon us. Ford has announced that he has no use for the Willow Run plant in which thirty thousand men have been employed manufacturing large bombers for the army. Only seven months ago he declared that the plant could be used for the manufacture of agricultural implements. The plant representing an investment of 80 million dollars belongs to the government. Ford's change of policy is undoubtedly due the fact that he would like to buy the plant from the government for as low a price as possible. If the plant is empty it will seem more plausible to offer the government a low price for it. Ford is undoubtedly establishing a pattern which will be generally followed by the industrialists to secure the billions of dollars worth of government owned industrial plants for twenty cents on the dollar. A fixed policy of leasing the plants would tend to discourage this dangerous policy of the industrialists. Furthermore the leasing, rather than the sale of the plants would allow smaller operators with less financial resources to enter the game. The war plants are so large that only a very few of our operators could afford to buy them at any price.

But this is only one of the issues involved in the problem of post war employment. The Murray bill, now before the senate, seeks to provide for adequate planning of industrial production. It provides for the exercise of the kind of foresight which congress repudiated when it threw out the President's National Resources Planning Board.

The nation now has a productive capacity of close to 200 billion dollars and a proved consumption power of only half that amount. Even after every possible discount is made we will have to have a consumption power of 50 billion more than the present consumption if we are to absorb the products of our machines and farms. We will have to raise the consumption power of the masses even while unemployment will tend to produce a deflationary spiral and to depress wages. We must absorb some ten million men of the armed forces into peace time industry even while that industry is being shifted from war to peace production. The task is enormous. Some of the policies which are required for carrying it out are:

a. A government construction program, particularly a housing program, running into billions per year. In order to secure this the opposition of the construction industry, which wrecked the early New Deal housing program, must be overcome.

b. A foreign trade program which will allow for an export of some ten billion dollars.

c. A reconversion program of the war plants which will prevent the government equities in war plants from being sold for a song and which will obviate the danger of their closing by the present operators for the sake of reducing their value. They should be leased and made available in a program of full production.

d. A continued price control which will prevent higher prices at the same time when unemployment will tend to debase wages.

e. Some provision for government surveys of total production schedules, both private and public to determine how

much public action is required to supplement private industrial programs.

Technics and the Generals

Field Marshal von Runstedt gave our correspondents a very careful estimate of the reasons for the German defeat. Our naval guns were too powerful and our air superiority too absolute. They prevented the Germans from throwing our expeditionary force back into the sea. The Chief of Staff, General Jodl, made a similar interpretation and added that war was a great game and the thing to do after it was over was for victors and vanquished to shake hands, like good sports.

The German military mind is revealing itself very clearly. It is a technical mind which served the purposes of the Nazi mania without inquiring into the larger purposes which their great military skill served. The non-moral mind served the immoral mind. The generals are even oblivious to the fact that a great moral indignation against Nazi evil was required to produce that superiority in guns and airplanes. We finally overwhelmed the Germans by a preponderance of power and the generals insist on looking at the whole problem in terms of military logistics. They will not inquire into the imponderables, particularly the moral imponderables which weighted the balance.

The German generals have given a very clear picture of one aspect of the German disease. The Nazis without the generals could never have succeeded in conquering the whole of Europe, just as their power of world anarchy could not have succeeded without the strong sense of order in the German commoner, who was willing to have his sense of order harnessed to the power of disorder.

Thus we learn a lesson about Germany from the German generals. But we had better remember that the whole of our technical civilization is endangered by this divorce of technics and morals. Our generals are not free of it; nor are other non-military technicians. When we compare the technical achievements of our military men in this war with the political confusion of our nations, the comparison yields almost as disquieting a picture of the state of civilization as the self-revelation of the Nazis yields the picture of German barbarism.

Our War with Japan

Various rumors have circulated recently about alleged peace offers made by Japan but which proved unacceptable to the United Nations. Whether true or not, these rumors call attention to the fact that Japanese fanaticism is in all probability somewhat different in kind from that of the Nazis. It is not likely that the Japanese are animated by the same "all or nothing" policy, the "Goetterdaemmerung" motif which the Nazis carried through to its bitterest conclusion, keeping a defeated nation in the struggle long after its defeat was obvious and until it was literally destroyed in every dimension of its existence.

Even if the Japanese militarists should have similar ideas Japan differs from Germany in the fact that the imperial house may well become a rallying point for business and other elements in Japan who would like to withdraw Japan from the struggle before its complete destruction.

From our standpoint the difference between Japan and Germany is important because it is not to our interest at all to destroy Japan completely. She must, of course disgorge her empire, including Formosa and Korea. But her industry is important for the health of Asia and her trading rights in Asia ought not to be throttled. Her complete destruction would moreover create a political vacuum in Asia which would be filled by western political power to the detriment of east-west relations.

Unfortunately the impetus of our war against Germany is being carried over into our war with Japan and we have nothing more imaginative to say about our policy than to reiterate the slogan of unconditional surrender. We must have conditions and we ought to state them. The wholesale destruction of Japanese cities by our bombers is being accepted much too complacently as a necessary policy. All evidences point to the intention of our military people to occupy Japan in the same fashion as we are now occupying Germany. Some of the best experts on Asia have warned against the perils of such an occupation. They predict that we will involve ourselves in a morass of difficulties among which the accentuation of racial animosity both here and there may be the most serious consequence.

These and other considerations prompt grave apprehensions about a policy toward Japan which represents merely the extension of our German policy. We ought to state our peace terms. They would naturally demand the destruction of Japanese militarism and divest Japan of its empire. But they ought to assure Japan of the right to live a normal and sane life in economic intercourse with the world. Such terms would make it easier for the anti-militarist elements in Japan to overthrow the militarists and come to terms with us. They might shorten the war by a year or two and save an untold number of lives on both sides.

REALISTIC THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL ACTION*

By JOHN C. BENNETT

It is commonly assumed that the more "realistic" trends in theology which have influenced the thought of the Fellowship of Socialist Christians cut the nerve of the Christian social imperative. There is one verbal problem that complicates the matter. Sometimes our theologians indulge in polemics against the "Social Gospel". They make the mistake of not distinguishing between the fresh sense of responsibility for social institutions which came to us in American Protestantism in the form of the Social Gospel and the theological assumptions which have often been the frame for the Social Gospel. Whatever we may decide to do about words and labels it would be well to make clear that there is an essential Christian impulse that came to us through the Social Gospel and that our theological criticism, instead of destroying it, provides for it a more adequate frame.

One dominant fact in the contemporary Church is that the concern of Christians for social institutions is even more widely emphasized now than at any time since the Middle Ages and it is guided by a more radical criticism of society than was the case then. The great ecumenical conferences have developed an impressive body of Christian social teaching. The most influential contemporary theologians have related their thought explicitly to the problems of society. The necessity of political resistance has forced European churches to act, and word has come that the younger leaders of the Lutheran churches on the European continent recognize that the tendency, common on Lutheran soil, to make an absolute distinction between the public and private orders is a serious error.

Two quotations support this claim concerning the influence of Social Christianity. The first is from an article by Professor Howard Hopkins, the historian of the American Social Gospel. He says in regard to contemporary theological criticisms of the Social Gospel:

"But such criticisms plus the soberings of the past five years, have given us a new understanding of the social truths of the gospel, and they have transformed what we have spoken of as a disparate movement into an almost universally accepted integral characteristic of contemporary Christianity."

The other quotation is from Dr. Visser 't Hooft who once wrote a somewhat less sympathetic account of the American Social Gospel and who is in his own person very representative of Protestant theology on the European continent. Dr. 't Hooft says:

"The doctrine, which has long dominated Christian thought and life, that the Lordship of Christ is to be conceived as confined to the realm of the 'inner life', and that it has no bearing on public life is discredited. Discussions between advocates of a 'social gospel' and those of an indi-

* With some misgiving I have used the words "Realistic Theology" to designate the trend which has most influenced the members of this Fellowship. It is a pervasive trend, present with many different shades of emphasis. Sometimes the label, "Neo-orthodoxy", is used but it is in the American context misleading.

vidual gospel are largely matters of the past. The Bible has taught us that the Lordship of Christ is all inclusive and universal."

This widespread acceptance of the social responsibility of Christians and of a radical Christian criticism of existing institutions is the dominant fact. But it is true that what I have called "realistic theology" does at certain points threaten Christian social action. It can be shown, I believe, that it provides a much sounder theology for Christian social action than unreconstructed liberalism but it is important to recognize these threats which are implicit in the newer theology. They are the more dangerous because the dialectical character of this theology causes it to be misunderstood. It is difficult for anyone to preserve the delicate balance that is necessary between the transcendence and relevance of the Christian ethic, between the rejection of utopianism and the maintenance of hope, and readers of this Quarterly may at times be misled by a strategic overemphasis upon one side of the truth in a particular editorial or article.

There are at least four ways in which theological realism may be used to undercut Christian social responsibility.

(1) Those who have not had a burning interest in social problems may be confronted first with the emphasis upon theology and lose themselves either in the intellectual fascination of theology or in the religious dimensions of height or depth to which it leads them. This has been the experience of a good many theological students. Anyone who starts with a passion for social justice and who is vividly aware of its claim upon the Christian is not likely to be led astray in this way. What we are dealing with is not the logical relation between Christian doctrines and social action but the psychological difficulty that many have in giving their attention to both.

(2) There is quite often a loss of the dynamic that comes from a simple hope for society in the future. This simple hope has proved to be an illusion but it has kept many Christians at the job. To show it up as an illusion is necessary but to put nothing in its place is disastrous. It is important for theologians to explain how far we can have hope that particular social problems can be solved, how far definite advances can be made.

(3) Perhaps more serious than the loss of hope for the future is the loss of clarity concerning our responsibility in the present. The more we stress the moral ambiguity of our social and political choices, the more we stress the fact that there is no sure Christian guidance for the technical issues that are present in most significant decisions, the more difficult it is to act with enthusiasm. I wonder if it is going to be possible for the average churchman to act if he is told how precarious from a strictly Christian point of view his action really is. Doubtless this works both ways and the more reflective business man or statesman or soldier will welcome with relief the idea that he must act as a Christian without claiming that his choice which leaves him at best with an uneasy conscience is an unambiguous Christian choice.

4. The most dangerous of all the uses of theological realism is to derive from it rationalizations for accepting less than we might be able to do. This is one place where Pelagius and his successors have been right. The doctrine of sin may be used as an excuse for moral com-

placency. The moral idealist who believes that he must ask for more than the possible in order to reach the possible has a point. He may succeed only in preparing the way for disillusionment, but his critic may rob men of the courage to go on and achieve the best that is possible. We can see how important sheer sticking to what seems impossible may be when we contemplate the fate of nations in this war. If the British nation had taken counsel of its doubts concerning what was possible in view of a "realistic" appraisal of the situation it would probably have gone under. How we can face the real human limitations that surround us without disastrously lowering our sights as Christians is a perpetual problem. Those who have never been through a "liberal" stage and who see only the insights of the theology of the Reformation are under the temptation to follow the line of least resistance. Those who are controlled chiefly by liberal idealism are in danger of building castles in the air that have no relevance to our real choices.

I have said that contemporary realistic theology provides a more adequate frame for the essential impulse of the Social Gospel than the liberal theology which was associated with it. Now I shall attempt to explain my reasons for believing that.

1. The emphasis upon the universality and permanence of sin is, if properly understood, both a reinforcement of the Christian social imperative and a source of illumination upon the concrete problems of society. It involves radical repentance. The difference which the belief in the universality of sin makes is that no one can treat himself as an exception. His own personal life, his motives, his perspectives, his causes, his institutions, his nation are all corrupted by sin. It is wrong to turn this into a fatalistic generalization and to suggest that there are no moral differences among us. But whatever moral achievement may be ours, we must still begin with ourselves, with our own sin. The recognition of this principle has several important social applications.

It undermines all forms of paternalism. Paternalism has been the chief distortion of the Christian ethic throughout history. It has been the excuse for systems of privilege and for the maintenance of uncriticized forms of power. So long as it was possible to give a paternalistic defense of permanent inequality in status it remained possible to harmonize such inequality with love. This could be done with sincerety and not least often by people who had sufficient orthodoxy. They had doctrines of sin but they did not apply them with rigor to themselves at the point where they were related politically or economically to others. Only as we understand that no one is disinterested enough to have irresponsible power over others, do we have a Christian basis for radical criticism of the institutions of Capitalism. The Christian employer if he understands himself should know that his workers need to be organized to resist him. The Christian white man, if he understands himself, should know how preposterous are all of the paternalistic rationalizations of a subordinate status for the Negro race.

We see the social importance of the Christian doctrine of sin when we try to reconcile opposing classes or nations or races. Whatever be the arguments for or against one side in a conflict, there is no hope of adjustment unless there are people within the conflict who are

willing to take note first of all of their own sins. It is not necessary to say that there are no moral differences between the parties to any such struggle. It is necessary for Christians to see that no social struggle is a black and white affair, that no human group is justified in taking a self-righteous attitude toward its opponents. One of the reasons that Franklin Roosevelt was so successful as a world statesman was the fact that he was able to see his own country as it appeared to others. One of his wisest sentences was one that he uttered when his own countrymen were furious in their criticisms of their Allies. He said: "international cooperation and progress are not helped by any nation assuming that it has a monopoly of wisdom or of virtue".

The problem is more acute when we face the stark evil of which Buchenwald has become the symbol. Here there can be no forgiveness where there is no repentance and even repentance cannot take the place of punishment. But it is important to remind ourselves of the responsibility of all nations for the rise of the madness of which these atrocities are the fruit. This can at least enable us to live with those millions of Germans who were, without understanding caught by forces which many nations helped to set in motion and then encouraged. When we see how mixed the responsibility for the origin of those forces was, how many accomplices the Nazis had in other lands, and when we see what a dreadful fate our bombers brought to the guilty and innocent alike in such cities as Dresden where a quarter of a million people perished in one raid, we are able to realize that after we have rejected with horror those of our enemies most responsible for atrocities, there remains a vast tragedy that transcends the moral differences between nations. Christians who are aware of the common sin of humanity are more likely to be aware of this tragedy.

Another consequence of this Christian emphasis upon sin is that it frees us from the temptation to assume that some new program, some new order will be proof against the pride and selfishness of those who control it. There is always a danger that men will either relax when they think that they have brought the Kingdom of God to earth or become fanatical in their attitude toward all opponents. Arthur Koestler's description of the inquisitors in *Darkness at Noon* who believe that no treatment of the individual opponent is too foul if it will advance the righteous cause suggests the moral trap that is ever present when men fail to keep themselves and their opponents before God with a consciousness of their common sin. Christian radicalism isn't safe for as much as a decade unless it is tempered by this kind of self-criticism; for the radical of one decade may become in the next the conservative apologist of the new order created by the revolution.

2. Realistic theology enables us to avoid the disillusionment that is almost sure to follow our periods of uncritical enthusiasm and hope. There may be some loss of dynamic when we take a sober view of the future but this loss is offset by the protection against the paralysis that is likely to come with disillusionment. The American Church is in very great need of levelling off its uncritical hope and its uncritical despair.

3. The gospel of forgiveness makes it possible for men to live responsibly in the midst of unavoidable evil without losing sight of the Christian standards in the light of which what they must do

is evil and without being overcome by self-condemnation. Richard Niebuhr in a recent paper has suggested that what Christians should seek is not an easy conscience or an uneasy conscience but a "forgiven conscience". The gospel of Christ has brought to men the possibility of the forgiven conscience. They need not defend themselves, pretending that what they do is better than it is. They need not seek to escape from the more difficult responsibilities of public life because only so can one have an easy conscience. Indeed one cannot have an easy conscience in so escaping if one understands what one is doing. In the war this is very clear. But it will be only a little less clear in the peace. We say that, in order to have peace, we must collaborate with the Soviet Union. Every choice in such circumstances becomes morally hazardous. I recently heard a person who is deeply concerned about the fate of Protestant Christians in the Baltic nations say that it would do more harm than good for American Christians to make public protests concerning their fate. In all sorts of ways we will be tempted to remain silent in the face of oppression in order to avoid a more widespread evil. We are right in this if the faith, which I share, is justified that the Soviet Union represents the rough beginnings of a new society that is on the whole constructive rather than, as in the case of the national socialists, the disease of an old order in which there was no hope. In the international sphere these compromises are writ large but our whole life is shot through with them. Only when we believe in the mercy of God can we be utterly honest with ourselves about the evil in what we find we must do. Only as we are honest with ourselves is there much chance for us to be fair or merciful to our opponents or enemies.

4. A fourth insight that is made possible by the realistic emphasis in theology is what we may call the duality of the Christian life. The Christian is both a member of the Church and a citizen of the larger human community. He need not stake everything on the immediate effect of what he does as a citizen. As a churchman he can take more for granted, he can push faster toward Christian goals than is possible in a mixed community. At least this ought to be the case in all matters of group relationship. It is true now so far as reconciliation between national enemies is concerned. One cannot claim with the same confidence that it is true in regard to relations between races and classes. The immediate task of the churchman is work within the Church to bridge those chasms. The Church is now, and it can become more so, a community which helps the individual Christian to live with a Christian perspective in the larger community. In this way it can have an enormous indirect effect upon civilization in addition to all that it may do directly to change the life of the world.

I do not believe that this Fellowship has explored all of the possibilities that there are in this dual strategy of the Christian. The kind of delicate balance in thought and attitude which is involved in the realistic trend in theology is almost impossible for an individual working alone in society. It will require the steadying influence of the Church, the concentrated training that the Church should give to its members, the alternation of worship and action, the correction of one by another that is natural within the Church's fellowship to enable the Christian citizen to remain true to his vocation.

THE SOCIAL THOUGHT OF 19TH CENTURY ENGLISH NONCONFORMITY

By PRINCIPAL H. F. LOVELL COCKS

Ronald Preston has told us in his article *A Century of Anglican Social Thought* (Christianity and Society, Summer 1943) that in the 19th Century the Church of England was in the main a class-church, and that Nonconformity "became predominantly the church of industrial capitalism and the backbone of the Liberal party". This is undoubtedly true. The long and noisy debate between the Established Church and Nonconformity concerned religious issues of high moment, but the corrupting influence of class-feeling on both sides made that debate singularly barren. Theologically the contending parties never came to grips, never clearly understood what they were fighting for and why the battle had to be waged. Anglicans and Free Churchmen alike had inherited a complex of political and social animosities which for nearly two centuries had obscured the properly religious lines of demarcation, and it is only within the last generation, perhaps only within the last few years, that, with the dying down of the ancient social quarrel, controversy between the two camps has been theologically rewarding. In the 19th century the struggle was inevitably a clash between the assailants and the defenders of political and ecclesiastical privilege. At the time of the Civil Wars of the 17th century, Anglicanism had been the religion of the nobility and squirearchy, but the lower middle classes and the higher artisans were predominantly Independent or Baptist. Presbyterianism, which appealed to the merchant class of London and the larger cities, gained no permanent footing in English life. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 stereotyped these social groupings, and during the following centuries and up to the disruption of the Liberal party in 1886 and the rise of Labour, Nonconformity in England becomes more and more homogeneous in composition, more and more the religion of rising industrialists and shopkeepers, whose social and political aspirations to a public influence commensurate with their growing economic power are resisted at every turn by an Anglican-Tory alliance, fighting rear-guard actions in defence of the *status quo*. Only against this historical background can the political philosophy or English Nonconformity be understood.

Since this article will stress the failure of Nonconformists in the realm of Christian social theory, we must begin by giving them full credit for their achievements in public service and social practice. The Free Churches shared the missionary and philanthropic zeal of the Evangelical Revival. They founded societies for converting the heathen at home and abroad; they established Sunday schools and day schools for the poor; they were to the fore in the crusade against negro slavery; they took the lead in the reform of municipal government.

Generation after generation of Rowntrees, Wills', Cadburys, and Frys, have maintained great family traditions of communal service and social experiment, and these aristocrats of Nonconformity have never lacked followers among the rank and file. The Nonconformist Conscience has vigorously attacked intemperance, gambling, sexual immorality, slums, and sweated labour. Free Churchmen have pioneered in profit-sharing and other schemes for the betterment of the workers. All this must be set down on the credit side. Nonconformists have been full of good works, public spirited and ungrudging in their service. But their unconscous subservience to a middle-class ideology hindered them from thoroughgoing social analysis, and because their diagnosis was at fault, they mistook symptoms for the disease and palliatives for remedies.

Now it may be said that to have formulated a Christian social doctrine adequate to the situation in which they found themselves, these Victorian Free Churchmen would have had to think thoughts that nobody at that time and place was thinking, and which even today, when sociology has equipped us with tools, and the latest phase of mass-civilization has provided us with material on which to use them, are by no means universally familiar and acceptable to Christian people. No doubt we moderns have a keener social awareness; have we not learned to take our bitter Marxist medicine? Yet in our thinking too there are ideological distortions for which our successors will judge us as severely as we judge the Victorians. All this is true enough, but hardly to the point. Our concern is not to condemn but to understand.

To dismiss Nonconformity as being merely the religious façade of bourgeois economic interests is a Marxist oversimplification. Many non-economic factors were at work. A long and bitter experience of social ostracism and of the hostility of a privileged State Church had been quite as effective as economic interest in uniting the Nonconformists in a working partnership with political Liberals. Add to this the influence of 18th century rationalism, which, while it hardly touched their theological orthodoxy, worked mightily upon their individualistic ethics and their political philosophy, and you have the social and intellectual setting that makes intelligible the deficiencies of Nonconformist thought.

In the first half of the 19th century Methodism was ostentatiously "otherworldly" and non-political; and this, despite the fact that the future leaders of British Labour were being trained in Methodist class-meetings, meant that official Methodism was politically well to the Right. Then, too, it must be remembered that at this time nothing annoyed Methodists more than to be called Nonconformists. John Wesley had never left the Anglican communion; and among his followers there have always been many who, by the use of the Anglican liturgy and in other ways, have flaunted the distinguished connexion with all the arrogance of poor relations. Not until the days of Hugh Price Hughes did Methodism begin to mass among the levies of political Nonconformity. Throughout the greater part of the century the Congregationalists and Baptists form the phalanx of attack, supported by the flying columns of Quakers and Unitarians. But Congre-

gationalists and Baptists were the quintessence of Nonconformity, the very dissidence of dissent-voluntarist and Independent in their polity and militantly anti-State Church. The Church and State issue was their constant preoccupation.

In earlier centuries a persecuted religious minority might have been tempted to see in the persecuting State a demonic power, but the thoughts of the English nonconformist confessors ran in other channels. Harsh as it was, the Clarendon Code did not demand a resistance unto blood, and belief in demons was at a discount in the England of Charles II and the Royal Society. The State was no devil but a mere device—the tool and weapon of a ruling class. 1662 thus stands in English history not for the great tribulation that purifies faith but for the petty persecution that produces men with a grievance. The Toleration Act of 1689 legalised nonconformist worship but in the century and a half that followed Nonconformists were to learn the difference between toleration and full enfranchisement. Meanwhile it appeared that the descendants of the New Model troopers were Englishmen only on sufferance and Christians by a parliamentary title. The State that Burke called a partnership in all art, science, and virtue, the Nonconformists saw as a close preserve of landed proprietors, a political and cultural heritage from which they were deliberately and maliciously excluded. In this State Nonconformists were little better than resident aliens, bearing the stigma of a permanent social inferiority and finding their efforts to remove their legal disabilities denounced as attempts to overturn the Constitution and to undermine the very foundations of society. We cannot wonder that Burke's political mysticism did not attract them, or that they allied themselves with exponents of a very different doctrine. The contractual theory of government and society seemed to them so clearly the secular counterpart of their own Independent doctrine of the Church as a covenanted fellowship, that they did not stop to ask whether the Liberal theory did justice to the complex facts of human community. The tumult of ecclesiastical and political controversy drowned for them the overtones of the great Burkian conception. The individual with his immortal soul, his right to freedom, and his personal responsibility to God; the State with its foundation in consent and its strictly limited police functions, these they knew in the two-dimensional philosophy of democratic Radicalism, interpreted in their own Christian idealist fashion. But human community as a partnership of the living with the dead and the unborn, animated by a truly social purpose that takes precedence over private interest, which economic systems and social organization must be made to serve; and the State as the organized will of such a community, directed to the furtherance of the good life, maintaining a spiritual heritage in which all share, and promoting that more than legal justice without which liberty is but an empty name—these the English Nonconformists did not know and came to learn but tardily.

Nothing could be more naïve than the conconformist doctrine of the State. It is true that from some errors Free Churchmen were protected both by their history and by the individualistic cast of their thought. For example, they

were not tempted to follow Hegel in identifying the State with the community. If they did not know what community was, at least they were quite certain what the State was not. But their positive thinking about the State never attained depth. Even when, in common with other schools of thought, they had abandoned *laissez-faire* with its strait-waistcoat theory of the State, they made no real advance towards a Christian understanding of the place and function of the State in the divine order.

Under the influence of the new social conscience, practical reformers made use of the State as an instrument of communal betterment without concerning themselves with ultimate problems. A few Fabians and Hegelian admirers of the way they did things in Bismarck's Germany knew that they were helping to fashion a State that was the antithesis of the old Liberal conception. But for the 'socialists' of the Nonconformist Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, Christian politics was summed up in compassion for the poor and legislative action to right their wrongs. Their naive belief was that it does not matter how much power is given to the State provided that the State be a democracy.[1]

Thus towards the end of its career, in the decade immediately preceding the first World War, political Nonconformity was invoking State action in the interest of all manner of social reforms. But this *volte-face* of opinion did not signify an advance in nonconformist political philosophy but merely registered a shift in the centre of gravity of political power. The mighty weapon of the State had been wrested from the hands of the landed proprietors and was being used against them. Universal suffrage was in sight. This once achieved, the old-fashioned Radicalism of political Nonconformity had attained its goal and fulfilled its destiny. Beyond, there loom up the problem of the omnicompetent State, the contradiction between universal suffrage and monopolistic capitalism, and the drift of a mass society towards totalitarian regimentation. Nonconformist political thought never came within sight of these issues. It was wholly assimilated to secular Liberalism, whose uneasy, unreflective development away from *laissez-faire* towards the social service State has its Free Church counterpart in the way that leads from the rigid individualism of a John Bright to the Christian paternalism of a George Cadbury. We look in vain for a genuine theology of politics. Here, at any rate, the Free Churches had lost their Calvinistic footing.

Calvinism as a theology of politics was never fully deployed in England. The presbyterian State Church of the Civil Wars was nakedly Erastian. The Baptist churches were unswervingly separatist, even during the Protectorate, when Cromwell in his slow, empirical way was tackling the problems that had confronted Calvin in Geneva. The Independents had wavered; many of them had accepted incumbencies in Cromwell's State Church. But when the Restoration brought back the Anglican supremacy, all the Calvinist churches were driven into private life. Now Calvinism in retirement is a very different thing from Calvinism in power; and after 1662, separatism with its corollary, the voluntary principle, becomes the foundation of English Nonconformity. This situation profoundly affected the Free Church conception of the State. Between the Nonconformists and the

[1] H. F. Lovell Cocks: *The Nonconformist Conscience* (London, 1943), p. 92.

real theological problem of the State now stood the Erastian Anglican establishment, distorting the perspective and confusing the issue. Even when the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the Hanoverian Succession had allowed Nonconformity to emerge from the catacombs, there was still no clear vision of the State. What Free Churchmen now saw was so obviously an illustration of Locke's contractual theory, a national bargain with Dutch William and the accession of German George by Act of Parliament, that no theological questions stirred in their minds. As for their Calvinism, where the original deposit was not lost, as in the Socinian twilight of English Presbyterianism, it became petrified into the brittle orthodoxy of 18th century Independency. Henceforward Calvinism had little influence on Free Church thought, although the secularized Calvinistic virtues that were the dynamic of industrial capitalism continued to flourish in Free Church Life. What of the Anabaptist influence? That had undergone a metamorphosis which is the mild English version of Anabaptist history on the Continent. The apocalyptic Rule of the Saints and the extravagancies of early Quakerism were transformed into an otherworldly, pacifist piety. Thus with the sealing up of its Calvinistic theology and the taming of its Anabaptist temper, English Dissent was ready to listen to such secular voices as could speak to its unprivileged social and economic condition.

All these voices united in proclaiming the liberty of the individual and the equality of men. This secularist gospel, at first hearing, might well seem the echo of a far more august and authoritative Word. But the "individual" of the new democratic philosophies was the natural, egoistic man, possessing value and making claims in his own right, and not the rational but sinful creature whose earthly titles stand only in the sovereign will of a creating and redeeming God. Nonconformists could not have been blind to the difference without ceasing to be Christian believers. But their history, civil disabilities, social inferiority, and economic and political aspirations, all combined to make them often unmindful of it. Their natural alliances and the heat of party conflicts conspired to postpone to the Greek Kalends a truly Christian critique of a doctrine so perfectly adapted to their immediate practical necessities. The problem of adjustment to the emerging industrial order was for each one of them private and personal a simple balancing of self-interest against the claims of neighbourly love. For them there was no novelty here. To meet the rightful claims of personal and family interest without being selfish, to be just without ceasing to be generous—was not this, after all, the perennial ethical problem, the same in every age of the world's history? What they failed to see was the blatant denial of the Christian doctrine of human community that lies at the heart of *laissez-faire*. Repudiating the medieval conception of Natural Law, *laissez-faire* had retained and distorted one element in it—natural rights. The right of property, which for medieval theology had been squarely based upon the social function property was to discharge as well as upon the well-being of the individual personality to which it was to minister, had been roughly torn out of its community context and made absolute. In Locke's theory, far from

property rights serving society, it is society, or at least the State, that comes into existence to serve them. When man shrivels into "economic man", private interest becomes the one calculable human motive, and we are not far away from denying the importance of any other. The result is to destroy the basis for any organic doctrine of human community. Society, it seems, rests upon the miraculous confluence and harmony of individual egoisms. The assertion that God is the author of this pre-established harmony and of the self-regarding mechanism of economic man is wholly in line with deism but irreconcilable with Christian theology. Still, reconcilable or irreconcilable, the two lived side by side in the minds of the untheological Nonconformists of the 19th century.

In these circumstances, we shall not expect to find Nonconformists in possession of an organic conception of community. In common with their contemporaries, they lacked a genuine social psychology, and it goes without saying that the children of the Age of Reason did not so much as suspect the existence of the Freudian Unconscious. But there is something else that we have to take into account, the mentality of the self-made man.[2]

"The philosophy of the self-made man is a belief in the virtue of hard work and in material success as evidence of divine favour. When the belief in predestination falls into the background (as it did in the nineteenth century) prosperity becomes less of a free gift of God to the unworthy and more of an earned wage and a just reward. If one can raise himself out of the common ruck by his own exertions, another can do it too. If there are some living below the poverty line, the first verdict on their case must be not that they are unfortunate but that they are lazy or vicious. There is a reluctance to admit the influence of circumstances on character—a reluctance that has a twofold source. Your self-made man cannot allow for the influence of unfavourable circumstances on the character and fortune of his unsuccessful neighbour without admitting the corollary that favourable circumstances may have had something to do with his own advancement. And, again, to concede that externals may determine the strength or weakness of the inner life appears to this individualistic way of thought as a virtual denial of the power of the Gospel to 'save' men, irrespective of their station and environment."

It was this same mentality that predisposed Nonconformists to an uncritical acceptance of Liberal individualism. The Tory had taught the worker to accept his lowly place in the social army as of divine appointment. The Liberal taught him that it was his duty to look for the Marshal's baton in his knapsack and to rise from the ranks, if he could. Neither Tory nor Liberal understood the real nature of communal solidarity. For the Tory, solidarity meant *solidity*. Society was like a cathedral, with all the stresses of its fabric immobilized in a static equilibrium. For the Liberal solidarity meant *solution*. Society was like a river, which would find its own level without the dams and levees of governmental interference. Only in its economic aspect did Society have for the Liberal a determinate structure; but there it was once more a rigid hierarchy of masters and men, rulers and ruled. The claims of democracy and freedom were amply secured once privilege had been divorced from birth and married to desert, and economic power guaranteed as a reward to those who could scale the ladders of self-help. That the

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 38 f.

ladders were very frail, so that none but the most nimble could hope to climb them, escaped the notice of the successful climbers, who either forgot their own early struggles against circumstance or looked back on them as a wholesome discipline essential to moral and material achievement.

Thus, while Nonconformists were by no means lacking in public spirit, their conception of community was of a typically middle-class society, an association of individualists, architects of their own careers, in whom a lively sense of what is due to themselves is combined with a frank recognition of the rights of others. These Christian bourgeois admitted the claims of their neighbours, but interpreted them in purely legal terms; and while allowing full scope to their charitable impulses, insisted on drawing a clear line between charity and justice. For them, all social evils were the results of individual vices; responsibility must be brought home to particular persons. If there is poverty and degradation, then these are the effects of thriftlessness, intemperance, and immorality. Vicious men will turn a palace into a slum; lazy workers will never earn good wages; drunkards and gamblers will always be poor. There are no external circumstances that can prevent a man from living a decent, God-fearing life. And though the weak and defenceless need our charity, the only help that will save an able-bodied man is self-help, which may confidently expect to be re-inforced by divine grace.

It is a tribute to the strength and sincerity of this hard, individualistic ethic, that in spite of its inadequacy it did contribute much to English community life. The sturdy independence and forthrightness of the Nonconformists have deeply permeated the national character. This puritan and nonconformist leaven has been a prophylactic against fascist poisons. There is in English life an ingrained social nonconformity which even the relentless pressure of a mass society has not yet been able to destroy. Then, too, the Free Churches by their very existence have testified to the worth and vigour of voluntary institutions—which are surely one of the strongest bulwarks of a democracy. It is true that Nonconformists have valued the voluntary principle even to excess, and have relied on it even in circumstances where State action and compulsion were the only remedies. Still, it is hard to see how democracy can flourish where voluntaryism is despised. Yet voluntaryism is not enough. A mechanized civilization has come into existence whose trends menace the life of human personality and make more necessary than ever before the virility of individual responsibility and initiative, while making the realization of those qualities, except for the few key men, more difficult than in any earlier phase of our modern world. A planned society demands concerted action taken on corporate decisions, and the purely individualistic ethic of 19th century Nonconformity gives little guidance regarding the decisions that have to be made or the standards that ought to govern them. We are faced with the necessity of rebuilding human community from the bottom upwards, and if we cannot do it in a Christian way it will most certainly be done for us in a totalitarian way.

Behind an inadequate view of human community, these Nonconformists were

making shift with a mutilated doctrine of the Church. Now the Independency of Thomas Goodwin and John Owen had been of the "high church" order. For them the covenanted community of Christians was a *Gospel Church,* not only as reproducing what they believed to be the polity and discipline of the Apostolic Age, but also as bearing witness to the Gospel by its own corporate life and obedience. That the Church is integral to the Gospel as the promise and earthly embodiment of the New Israel of God, that its constitution and ordered life is no affair of worldly expediency but must be a faithful reflection of the divine pattern of a redeemed society, that its proclamation of the Word and its dispensing of sacramental grace must determine its institutional structure as well as its prophetic and priestly acts and the individual witness of its members—these we take to be the essence of the high church doctrine; and these are as truly characteristic of classic Independency as of the Anglicanism of the Caroline divines and their Tractarian successors. But between classic Independency and 19th century Congregationalism came the Evangelical Revival, with its purely individualistic Gospel and its carelessness regarding church order. For the men of the Evangelical Revival the Church was a company of saved individuals, banded together for mutual edification and missionary enterprise. The entire conception of a Christian *society* witnessing as such to secular society, and bringing under the judgment of the Gospel of the Incarnation economic systems, political institutions, and every department of human life and activity, this is nowhere to be found in the Evangelicalism that revivified the personal piety and missionary and philanthropic zeal of the nonconformist churches. And even when at long last the social conscience of Nonconformity was thoroughly awakened, and the "social gospel" begins to be proclaimed, there is no departure from the prevailing low churchism. The churches, instead of being exclusively missionary agencies, now become committee-rooms of the Kingdom-of-God party. It is true that the Congregationalists still cherished their Independency, but except for a few like R. W. Dale they no longer understood its high church quality, but in the main regarded it with some complacency as a church order eminently adapted to the democratic spirit of the age.

So much for the past. Since the first World War political Nonconformity has died. There is no longer a specifically Free Church approach to public questions. In the main the contemporary tendencies that Ronald Preston noted in the Anglican communion are paralleled among Nonconformists. Certainly, the Free Churches have fewer medievalists and rather more Liberal Protestant survivors, but the lines of demarcation in social ethics and even in theology no longer march with denominational frontiers, which indeed seem to many increasingly questionable. The problems of reunion demand and are receiving fresh and unprejudiced handling from younger men who have no vested interest in the perpetuation of "our unhappy divisions". Meanwhile, there are bright hopes for a united Christian Front in face of the daunting problems of social reconstruction. There are certain weaknesses, of course. Two may be singled out, but because Free Churchmen have anything like a monopoly of

them, but rather because their traditions make them only too ready to succumb to them. The first is an undue reliance upon pronouncements, manifestoes, resolutions and other high-sounding statements of "Christian principles". The second, not unconnected with the first, is a reluctance on the part of many Free Church reformers to qualify for their task by a first-hand study of social problems on the basis of real competence in economic and sociological science. Perhaps it was to be expected that the reverence paid to economic laws by the grandfathers would lead the grandsons to react violently against them. Only that reaction must not be carried to the point of denying to economic science that measure of autonomy that incontestably belongs to it. No, Free Churchmen have come to a better frame of mind; but like all Christians who have a concern for the mass-society of which they form a part, to their idealism they must add on the one side theology, and on the other technical competence in the social sciences. Hard thinking is needed; and a truly Christian realism; and above all Christian compassion and a real love of men, known in personal ways in the give and take of secular community, as well as in the fellowship of Christian believers.

CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

By CHARLES D. KEAN

The war-era through which we have been passing for thirty years or more has been described very often as a crisis of civilization. It has also frequently been called a crisis of culture. Many thinkers, with differing points of view, have declared that the way the world's intricate problems are handled during the next ten years or so will decide whether or not Western civilization (or Western culture) will disappear.

Many people recognize that the problems of war today and peace tomorrow present a kind of judgment upon human society. At the least they test the enduring qualities of institutions as we know them. The type of judgment depends, of course, upon one's view of human nature and its setting. The details of the judgment depend upon one's view of history and philosophy. The significance of the judgment is primarily a religious recognition.

Any observer of current affairs can see in the complicated world situation today indications of problems more profound than the war and settlement—serious problems though these are. A cursory acquaintance with history is enough to make one realize that the rate of technological and social evolution was accelerated tremendously during the past two centuries, while the rate of political evolution and of economic theory, even less than economic practice, has not kept up with it. The lag has progressively created aggravated political and economic crises—wars and depressions—culminating in the contemporary era of dislocation.

The question with which a good many thoughtful minds are concerned today is whether the processes of reconstruction can be thorough enough to provide a tolerable synthesis of technology, economics and politics in which man's variegated social institutions may flourish with relative and meaningful autonomy. Failure to achieve such a synthesis in the course of reconstruction will result in further crisis—at the least an extension of the world's present difficulties, and at the most a radical destruction of many of the institutions that the modern world has come to regard as necessary for adequate living.

The details of the alternatives vary widely in the opinions of those who have written on the subject. Some say it is possible that the process of institutional decay, particularly when accompanied by the disintegration of economic relationships, may result in the loss of technics, so that the material fabric of Western society may disappear in large part, if not altogether. For others, the crisis does not so much involve a threat that technics will be lost as that political and economic hegemony, and intellectual leadership along with it, will pass forever from the Western powers. For still others, the threat is concerned with the possibility of widespread sociological and psychological disturbance due to continued political and economic chaos on the one hand and increased high technology on the other.

It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the possible effects of a failure to make an adequate political and economic synthesis during the period of reconstruction. Rather, it is concerned with the fact that widespread awareness of the profound depths of the contemporary world dislocation throw new light on the meaning of the terms "culture" and "civilization." Clarification of these terms may provide considerable help in appreciating the nature of man's problem by placing it in perspective, and hence contribute toward some solution.

When any modern thinker attempts to make a diagnosis of our times he uses the terms "culture" and "civilization." Sometimes his emphasis is more upon one than upon the other, but in any event these two words have become necessary tools for the description of the human situation. Their use in connection with the contemporary world situation is indicative of the fact that human society must be described with reference to other than political and economic categories if it is to be understood with any penetration. Indeed, political and economic developments themselves, in order to be understood, require a frame of reference.

The terms "culture" and "civilization" are used primarily as categories describing the background and setting of human activity. Both the complex of political, economic, and social forces which, with the prevailing intellectual climate and its cross currents, make up the environment of the moment, and also the cumulative effect of all kinds of historical forces originating in the past, have the most profound influence upon human thought and action. The terms "culture" and "civilization" are descriptive of the environmental and historical impact that affects men and institutions. As generally used, the term "civilization" refers to the more material aspects of the general human situation, although its usage is not confined to that, while the term "culture" refers to the more intellectual aspects of the same situation.

The foregoing is intended only as the most general summary of the commonly accepted meaning of the terms, the use of which varies widely. Sometimes they are used as synonyms and sometimes as complementary concepts. While this article is neither an etymological nor a semantic study of the words, its basis is in the fact that there is confusion as to what is meant by the words "culture" and "civilization", and that this confusion contributes to the difficulty of appreciating the crisis of our times. Because the words are used so widely today and with so many shadings, an etymological study would appear to be pedantic rather than helpful. At the same time, a study of the semantics involved would by itself merely add to the description of our problem without contributing very much to the proposed solution.

The fact of the matter is that both the terms "culture" and "civilization" are used very loosely. Anthropologists, sociologists, historians, philosophers and theologians may be quite profound in their analysis of the particular institutions that concern them, and very vague at the same time as to what they mean by the more general terms they use as a frame of reference. Indeed, both terms frequently appear to be general summaries of the totality of human institutions—considered either under the ma-

terial or from the intellectual headings. There are, of course, thinkers who use both terms—usually one or the other—with great precision, but even here there are wide differences in interpretation. What is therefore proposed is not to analyze comparatively the variations in meaning as would a student of semantics, but to propose almost arbitrary definitions for both. By stating with some precision meanings for the terms "culture" and "civilization" that will be consonant with the general traditional understandings, these terms will be made more useful for Socialist Christians. They will be tools for the analysis of contemporary problems and the description of today's crisis.

Both culture and civilization involve human activity and therefore a precise definition must rest upon an estimate of human nature. Indeed, part of the semantic problem is that both terms are shaded in line with the theological and anthropological positions of the users. For those who accept the Socialist Christian point of view, following in general the direction of Niebuhr and Tillich, decisions have already been made as regards estimating the nature and destiny of man, and therefore the terms "culture" and "civilization" will be in line with such a view.

The most fundamental problem for man in any age under any conditions is the problem of his own existence. The ambiguity and resultant conflict between his historical and intellectual experience make the problem inescapable, even though its significance is more often than not confused. This ambiguity does not only take the form of confused appreciation of the meaning of man's historical relationship on the one hand, and intellectual self-assertion on the other. It also includes the incongruity between the influence of the historical setting upon his life, whether or not he has any profound appreciation of it, and that of the prevailing intellectual climate he takes for granted and that provides his thought-forms—including the form his self-assertion takes. This means that the conflict between the historical and intellectual levels of man's experience involves a parallel conflict between the historical situation in which he lives and the ideology he uses.

The problem of existence is, however, never a purely individual problem, even though it plumbs the most profound depths of self-consciousness. Man's concrete historical experience is always in the context of the institutions to which he belongs and which exert a claim upon him. At the same time his intellectual experience, and background of his claim to autonomy, is always in the setting of an implicit or explicit epistomology and ontology that is institutionally propounded. The development and the use of his tools, either the technical artifacts of material life, or the concepts and ideas of the world of reason, are the results of his institutional associations. Man without institutional relationships is not himself, but, as a matter of fact, he can only be thought of apart from an institutional setting by abstractions.

Whether the terms "culture" and "civilization" are loosely used or strictly defined, they always have reference to the institutional setting in which men live. The general tendency, where a serious distinction is made between the terms, is to use culture with reference to the intellectual aspects, and civilization with reference to the material as-

pects of this situation. The confusion as to the precise meaning of the terms, and as to their relative importance, now indicates that these terms properly describe the institutional extensions of the problem of existence.

Man, who lives inevitably in an institutional setting, finds an ambiguity and resultant conflict between historical aspects of his institutional relationships and the intellectual aspects of the same relationships. The total historical aspect of institutional relationships — the cumulative political, economic, sociological and psychological effect of history upon his associations, such as the family, the school, the church, the nation, the state, etc.—is what we mean by the term *Civilization.* The prevailing intellectual interpretation of the same institutions is what we mean by the term *Culture.* Therefore, the ambiguity that affects each man's existence is made manifest in institutional form by a parallel ambiguity between Civilization and Culture.

Civilization, in other words, is the total complex of human institutions at any given moment with all their background, with all their alleged and actual functions, with all their methods and technics, in all their inter-relatedness, seen under the heading of history. Civilization is man's economic, political and social environment as it affects his life, and as it relates him through the institutional settings into which he enters with the lives of other people. To delimit civilization by applying the term exclusively to the material aspects of society—to man's developed artifacts without taking into account the institutional setting in which these artifacts bear witness to their functions—is to narrow the meaning of the word, and to make it impossible to appreciate the dialectical depths of man's social relationships.

When we consider the civilization of the present day, we see that it certainly includes the institutions in which a high technology is utilized, such as the organization of factories under the headings of fiscal management, corporate control, engineering planning, production for sales, distribution, etc. And it also includes all those institutions whose specific functional processes have been affected by technical methods and developments—the state, the community, the school, the church, the family, etc. But it includes these institutions, not only in terms of their material perquisites, but also in terms of their political and economic and social relationships; and consequently it includes every other institution—the social club, recreational facilities, socially ameliorative agencies, etc., existing in the same society. To understand the civilization of any given time, the basic problem is to appreciate in historical perspective the functions and relationships of the institutions comprising it.

Culture is not concerned with thought-forms as such, but only with the intellectual interpretation of man's social institutions. It does not deal with a different set of institutions, nor with a different aspect of the institutional set-up. Both civilization and culture are concerned with the institutional constellation in its totality. Culture is the same set of institutions considered not in historical perspective but in terms of meaning. Culture is man's shared opinion about the nature and function and, primarily, about the value of the

institutions that he finds related. This statement does not mean that culture, by definition, signifies that there can be only one such opinion held, but it does indicate the fact that one general understanding usually predominates at any given time. Indeed, a basic cultural manifestation may be the predominant idea, hierarchically outranking all lesser ideas, that the existence of variety in detailed opinion about institutions is the sign of a high stage in social evolution. Culture comprises the whole hierarchy of ideas and attitudes and understandings with which man appraises his institutional relationships. Culture is the prevailing epistomology, ontology and ideology, together with the thought-forms that connect these fundamental aspects of thinking to the institutions in which man lives.

Because culture is more significantly a prevailing epistomology, ontology and ideology, rather than detailed opinions about particular institutions, in practice it is taken largely for granted. Men may criticize some of the institutions with which they are associated. They do not as a rule criticize their own standards for understanding, analyzing and appraising them. It is chiefly in times of cultural breakdown that culture itself becomes an important issue for other than scholars.

When we consider modern culture, we see first of all that it is exceedingly complex, with the interpretation of its innumerable and intricate institutional pattern containing a wide variety of competing thought-forms. For just one example, there was considerable variation before the war between the expressed opinions of the spokesmen for American universities as to just what the university was supposed to be doing, and the difference in some cases represented distinct cleavages in educational orientation. Other examples could be given as well. Using the principle of hierarchical levels of cultural elements, we can see that in modern culture the variety is largely confined to the more superficial levels.

With allowance given for the influence of certain notable exceptions, modern culture has been predominantly marked by a subject-object dichotomy in epistomology that is reflected in the interpretation given to all social institutions, and which is particularly illustrated by the prevailing western faith that men by some kind of scientific approach to their political, economic and social problems could establish the system that would eliminate them. Modern culture again is predominantly marked by an ontological view, sometimes expressed in theological language—the universe is made by God, hence all within it is fundamentally good—but more often in secular terminology, which would ascribe intrinsic fundamental health to human nature and hence the possibility of such basic soundness to human institutions. Modern culture is optimistic about the historical destiny of human institutions, even though it usually recognizes the need for revision of existing forms and the creation of new ones. Modern culture is again predominantly marked by an ideology of which the so-called "bourgeois ideology" describes by the Marxists is but one symptom that would, among other things, ascribe primary value to economic considerations in the interpretation of social institutions, with this ascription, however, frequently

being covert and accompanied by an overt denial of the valuation given. The foregoing is admittedly an oversimplification of the basic strains in modern Western culture, given for the purpose of illustration rather than for exhaustive definition.

Without using our terminology exactly, the Marxists have pointed out the same ambiguity between Culture and Civilization, but they have restricted its application to the conflict of economic classes. As Socialist Christians, we see an inevitable ambiguity, regardless of any existing or conceivable class alignments, because the incongruity of civilization and culture is an accurate extension of the problem of man's existence. As long as history remains history, and consequently as long as man-in-history seeks to pretend to be unconditioned, this ambiguity will mark the activity of the institutions to which he belongs. It cannot be reconciled by the concept of a classless society, because even the realization of such an ideal still leaves ambiguity between the institutions of economic function and the prevailing interpretations given them, an ambiguity springing, not from the ideology of privileged classes, but from the nature of man.

In the light of this explanation, a crisis in civilization is the dislocation of traditional political and economic and social institutions through the impairment of their historical functions, with the form of their evolving successors obscured by social chaos. The chaos itself is partly, although not entirely, explained by the attempt of those involved in the dislocated institutions to make them survive in spite of their having become obsolete, an attempt that impedes the evolution of adequate political, economic and social institutions to fill the place left by those whose functions have been impaired. The chaos is explained also by the impact upon the prevailing institutional pattern of cumulative historical forces that accelerates the process of obsolescence to which all institutions in history are subject. The chaos may be described as a social vacuum created by the functional impairment of traditional social institutions, for a variety of causes, without the completed evolution of adequate successors. A student of history can use such a description as a valuable interpretative guide into the nature of the present world problem.

A crisis in culture, however, is primarily the loss or threatened loss of validity of traditional thought-forms, including the prevailing epistomology, ontology and ideology. Such a crisis does not develop isolated from history, but in reaction to history. It is a bringing to a head in eruptive form of the inevitable ambiguity between culture and civilization under circumstances that challenge the relatively successful synthesis that has prevailed. Men are led to question the meanings they have ascribed to traditional institutions. While all such interpretations are, in the last analysis, hypothetical, as long as the synthesis is not endangered, men can live as if the traditional interpretations had intrinsic validity. In time of cultural crisis, many and varied hypotheses are advanced to compete with each other for acceptance without the chance to test their relative validity on the basis of prevailing synthesis. A time of cultural crisis is a time when men are seri-

ously confused as to the meaning of the institutions in which they live, so that they are torn between challenging the institutions on the one hand, and seeking more adequate interpretations on the other. The seriousness of a cultural crisis may perhaps be measured by the index of the influence of those who deny any possibility of propounding even relatively valid interpretations for any known or conceivable social institution, since such an attitude can only be widely influential in times of widespread cultural confusion.

When the word "crisis" is used to denote a dislocation of either civilization or culture so serious as to make immediate uncertainty the paramount aspect of the social scene, with no significant assurance as to the nature of the ensuing situation, it will be evident that a crisis in civilization is inconceivable without a crisis in culture, and vice versa. But they are not the same thing. There can be, and there often have been, dislocations in civilization of serious magnitude, such as during the war-era of the early eighteenth century, that were not accompanied by cultural dislocations of parallel seriousness. From the standpoint of the history of culture in the Western world, there has been a consistent and continuous evolution from the time of Descartes to the present, and even the French Revolution did not so much present a cultural challenge as an extension of already prevailing attitudes into the field of politics. Therefore, neither the early eighteenth century nor the early nineteenth century can be said to have witnessed a major dislocation of culture, even though they definitely saw serious political and economic revisions. In other words, profound dislocations in civilization may take place without there being parallel dislocations in culture, but the reverse is not true—there cannot be profound dislocations of culture without related political, economic and social confusion. And when the manifestations of the cultural dislocation reach the proportions of a crisis, there will be present also a crisis in civilization.

The Western world has been accustomed to periodic dislocations in civilization—the breakdown of political and economic institutions and the challenging of prevailing institutions by others in terms of power. Indeed, the Western world has tended to regard such dislocations as providing the dynamic of history with the conflicts for supremacy giving the real explanation of any conflict of ideologies. It has generally failed to recognize that ideologies cannot be separated from epistomology and ontology, and, consequently, that conflict of ideologies is what gives critical meaning, should there be such meaning, to any struggle for power.

This general attitude of the Western world toward history is part of its cultural pattern, and its inadequacy to interpret the present war-era (the inadequacy of understanding the present war-era under the headings of economic and political power) is symptomatic of the contemporary cultural problem. The fact that the attitude, however, is still largely accepted demonstrates that the cultural dislocation has not progressed as far as it can. On the other hand, the unlikelihood of any tolerable synthesis being achieved in the process of reconstruction without radical revision of

culture bears witness to an implicit, if not explicit, crisis on that level.

All wars, in proportion to their magnitude, threaten and destroy the social institutions of that part of the world they affect. The process of reconstruction is the restoration of such institutions as can be salvaged and the development of such new institutions as are needed in order to achieve a tolerable equilibrium in political, economic and social life. The question of salvage as against invention, or vice versa, is largely an experimental question that has never before been decided in advance in any detail, but both salvage and invention presuppose a relatively clear cultural basis upon which to build. Man's social institutions are never the result of an unqualified pragmatism, but always the result of a synthesis between the demands of history and prevailing canons of interpretation. The institutions developed then become both part of history and of man's intellectual life. They enter into a new synthesis of civilization and culture that at best can be only relatively stable because of the inevitable ambiguities between its components.

In the light of this analysis, as we look at the present war-era, the critical question of the present is whether or not there is a cultural basis of sufficiently wide acceptance, and of adequate profundity, so that upon it both the salvaged and new social institutions of the post-war world can be erected to form a fairly stable synthesis between culture and civilization. Socialist Christians tend to believe that the prevailing culture of the Western world for the past few centuries lacks what is needed for this task. The problem of an adequate epistomology, ontology and ideology that will permit man to know himself, to understand his situation, and to take part freely in a number of varied institutional relationships, is the cultural issue of the present day. The kind of answer given to it will determine the nature, not of the post-war civilization since an inadequate answer will leave the world in a continued war-era, but of civilization itself.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE DEVIL'S SHARE, *by Denis de Rougemont.* Pantheon. $2.50.

"It is the Devil's cleverest wile to convince us that he does not exist." Denis de Rougemont, in his book *The Devil's Share,* uses this passage from Baudelaire as his theme in making a diagnosis of the underlying causes of the confusion of our times. This young Swiss author, whose reputation was made on the Continent before the war (in, for instance, his *Love in the Western World,* 1940), and who has been published in such periodicals as *The Atlantic* in this country, has given us an essentially spiritual interpretation of the contemporary world dislocation.

The past ten years have seen a plethora of diagnoses of the modern world from every conceivable angle. Historians, economists, philosophers, theologians, sociologists, anthropologists, with variations and combinations of all these, have used their distinctive insights in order to illuminate the meaning of our age. Many of these works have been of real significance, and the presence of such a variety had helped us at any rate to appreciate that we live in a complex age.

Denis de Rougemont does not offer his interpretation as one more oversimplification of the meaning of an epoch. His diagnosis is not intended as one to be placed alongside the others so that the reader may select "either-or". In one way, to be sure, his book is another in this series of diagnoses. In another and more profound way it is a unique and valuable contribution to the literature of our day. Along the first line, the author recognizes that the spiritual attitude of individuals by themselves and of Western culture as a whole has had a great deal to do with both the etiology of the present world sickness and also with our inability to realize the basic nature of our problems. Along the second line, he has made a daring and ingenious application of the religious position of Kierkegaard to both the problems of the individual in modern society and the the conflict of the democracies with totalitarian power.

The Devil's Share is magnificent myth. It is not a book about mythology. It is a daring and dramatic use of myth as myth is understood in the existential school—from a technical point of view this is the best modern example of the proper use of myth that this reviewer has ever seen. The tradition of the Devil in all its angles is used in such a way as to make the reader recognize his own spiritual problem and the relationship of his own self-deception to the problem of the world of which he is a part.

The Englishman, C. S. Lewis, used the concept of the Devil in *The Screwtape Letters* two years ago as a means of clarifying modern moral problems, but Lewis' use of the Devil was as a character in a parable rather than as the dramatic actor in the myth of existence. De Rougemont's use is, therefore, very much more profound.

What de Rougemont has done is to show us that the self-reliant man, the darling of the nineteenth century culture and the heritage which has fallen to our century, is singularly defenseless

in the exigencies of the real world. He is being continually betrayed in every situation in which he finds himself. His pride in his own reason undoes him. His pride in political evolution, no matter to what extent that evolution is carried, leaves him unprepared to discover that the basic problems of human nature re-assert themselves on every level in every age. When the world produces a Titan, such as Hitler in our time, the self-reliant man unloads upon him the full onus for the world's difficulties—not that the Titan does not have a tremendous responsibility, but the unloading serves to clear the conscience of the unloader and leave him in a false situation. The problem can be found in every angle of modern society, as the author shows, including our religions at their best.

The author uses some of the familiar titles by which the Devil has been named in tradition as the means of making his point clear. The most interesting and illuminating, perhaps, are: the Prince of this World, the Accuser, and Legion. The Prince of this World is the imperialist attitude which perhaps shows itself most obviously in political relationships but which has a way of cropping out in man's intellectual life and finally in his spiritual life. The Accuser is the historical situation, as symbolized either by the key individual or by some dramatic event, which reveals by its existence our own moral bankruptcy. The name, Legion, is the most provocative of all, because it refers to the fact that evil has so many aspects in concrete situations that any attempt to define the evil and remove it oversimplifies the situation, and becomes the occasion for the re-assertion of evil on a more refined level in ourselves. De Rougemont's illustration is that of Hitler telling the German people that the blame for their troubles should be ascribed to: (1) the Treaty of Versailles, (2) the Jews, (3) the Soviets, and (4) the Anglo-Saxon plutocrats. Each successive definition deepened the spiritual confusion of those who accepted it, as they were led to externalize life's problems to assign responsibility anywhere and everywhere—but to the German people themselves.

The author's use of Hitler is most interesting. Unlike some of the other diagnosticians who make the man, Hitler, simply the unrelieved evil genius of our time and by so doing becloud our vision into more basic problems, de Rougemont makes Hitler the historical symbol of the Devil's impact, as Prince of this World, of the Accuser, and finally of Legion. "Hitler points out to me in gigantic letters all that I must combat in my life, all that reflects his 'grand strategy' in the confusion of our morals."

The author's appreciation of the role of sex in modern culture is profound and valuable, as also is his development of the Agape-Eros dialectic in the practical situation where Love is an issue. He shares with St. Paul and with Kierkegaard an estimate of the cultural role of woman in society which this reviewer has never been able fully to appreciate in either master and consequently does not with de Rougemont either. The secondary role of the feminine is indeed more mythological than historical as all three use it, but all three make it a matter of practical concern which presents an obstacle to those who do not share completely their particular relationship to physical love and life. De Rougemont has developed the theme

of his *Love in the Western World* again as one strain in the present volume. The mythological aspect of this strain makes sense, but the historical application of it is a problem.

Denis de Rougemont's *The Devil's Share* is a masterpiece of spiritual diagnosis from the existential point of view. While no reader will agree with the author at every point, his insights into the real nature of the predicament of modern man are both profound from a theological point of view and clear from a literary standpoint. While his solution has not been elaborated, it was hardly with the compass of this book to develop it. The suggested solution, however, shows that de Rougemont is not confused by the meaning of history the way his fellow-Swiss, Karl Barth, appears to be. He suggests the humble man, seeking continually to achieve a tolerable society by working through autonomous cultural groupings bound together federally—somewhat in the line of Malinowski or Mannheim—but he does not develop this idea very far. The significant fact is that de Rougemont, while illuminating the problem of history, does not sunder man from it.

The Devil's Share is a remarkable and valuable work. The translator, Haakon Chevalier, has done, on his part, an able job.

CHARLES D. KEAN

CHRISTIANITY AND THE CULTURAL CRISIS, *by Charles Duell Kean.* Introduction by Reinhold Niebuhr. Association Press. 1945. 207 pp. $2.

The Christian argument of this rewarding and instructive book is that modern mankind has cut itself off from the real understanding of life by "externalizing" it. It is the Christian understanding that nothing is really external so as to be accessible to a judgment from without; and it is the fundamental attitude of modern man to treat all things of this world including himself and the community and its history as externally given and objectively explorable. This attitude has been transferred from natural science to the social sciences and is supposed to make possible in the latter field what it did make possible in the former: control and mastery, according to the ambition of a technical age.

This profound observation about the dominant materialism of this age is immediately applied to political economy, that is, the whole of the socio-economic arrangements and the political institutions in which they function. In the center of the book is the discussion of the manifold ramifications and manifestations of the Harrington-Locke-Ricardo doctrine, which, according to the author, is fundamental to modern culture and its crisis. James Harrington in the middle of the 17th century victoriously proclaimed the economic interpretation of political history, as a weapon in the struggle of the rising commercial interests against the British crown and its feudal ideology; Locke half a century later conceived the doctrine of political freedom for economic power, which was later transformed into the doctrine of *laissez-faire;* Ricardo in the 19th century and Adam Smith in the 18th—completed the externalization by describing man as exclusively motivated by the profit interest. The bulk of the book is devoted to a discussion of the varying manifestations of this combined

doctrine in American social and economic history and institutions.

The remarkable thing is that that formula, born of opposition, proved capable of serving successive oppositional interests whenever its former beneficiaries became dominant; most recently it has been re-adapted to serve the interests of labor. The reverse side is, however, the increasing dislocation of this world reduced to political economy, which proves the inadequacy of the underlying theory and the cultural character of what is dealt with as if it were economic and political crises. Property is an all-human category, designed to satisfy the needs for security, for recognition, and for power, of which the last one is most competitive and ambivalent; reduced to a money claim property becomes completely dehumanized and determines men's activities—or idleness —as an external force. Work, an expression of personality, is equally depersonalized, transformed into cash-value, and degraded into a means of property. The author enumerates seven different sources of unemployment (he has them all side by side, no matter whether they are avoidable or, for technical reasons, unavoidable under any system, such as building in winter) and reviews social security projects as deserving, but not touching, and not designed to touch, upon the root of the evil—he is right.

On an international scale the dynamics of property as economic power leads to duplication of investments in different countries, with the consequent struggle for markets, and ultimately war, as the logical outcome. In this context the author discusses fascism and its war, which he interprets as economic imperialism, an attempt to do away with competitors and transform them into tools of the expanding economy of the master race. From which it follows that "war is not the major problem of our age. Rather it is the political concomitants of a philosophy of life that places economic considerations in the paramount position."

The detached and incorruptible mind of the author—a preacher and teacher—shows itself at its best in the following section on church and school, of which he deems it absurd to expect any fundamental opposition, the school, as in any society, fitting the coming generation into the accepted pattern of life, and the church as an institutional body being of necessity informed by, and through her endowments dependent upon, the political economy of the age. Nay, the situation of the church is even worse because, in contrast to her position in pre-industrial society, she has no longer any basic function in externalized society and is tolerated rather than needed. This, of course, refers only to the church as a social institution. It depends on the strength of her spirit whether she can break with the prevailing mode of society, at the cost of her influence in education, social work, and recreation. To lose these positions of minor power would not be a bad thing at all if it enabled the church effectively to challenge society, as any society is challenged and tested by the gospel.

The book develops one theme only—this is its virtue and its limit. It is doubtful that its analyses of power, fascism, and war are comprehensive enough, being in purely economic terms. The book does not relate our situation to the existence of, and challenge by, the Soviet; it reads as if this were a

purely bourgeois world. Nor has it a word about the racial issue. What is perhaps more serious is that it refrains from any recommendations in the institutional field and exclusively concentrates on fundamental rethinking as the way out, on the—wholly justified and well documented—theory that every institution can be put to different usages—take social security as an example. But all this only means that one would have liked a somewhat larger and less modest book from the pen of the author, who is a member of our Fellowship and regular contributor to this magazine.

EDUARD HEIMANN

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN LATIN AMERICA? *by George P. Howard.* 170 pp. + xxii. Westminster Press. 1944. $2.

This book both enrages and pleases the eager Protestant. The revelations of Roman Catholic policy in Latin America offend one's sense of fair play. The fact that nearly all these revelations are signed statements by Catholics themselves makes one feel that the 3000 Protestant missionaries in Latin America have on the whole done creditable work which the hierarchy will attack in vain.

The author, a Protestant minister, born in Argentina, but educated both in Latin America and in the United States, has spent 35 years in religious work on the southern continent. In that time he has earned the friendship of scores of outstanding citizens, both Catholic and non-Catholic.

The problem of Protestant-Catholic relationships bids fair to become one of the major issues of the rest of this century. Religious bigotry has resulted in riots and wars in times past, and in the present century there have been numerous instances of overt conflict between Catholics and Protestants, both in Europe and in the Americas, chiefly because there was no commonly-accepted standard of religious liberty. The Catholic position has been stated very pointedly by a French Catholic writer, Louis Veuillot: "When we are in a minority, we ask for religious liberty in the name of your (Protestant) principles. When we are in a majority, we refuse it in the name of ours." Such a conception, of course, roots back into the belief in the Catholic Church as the one true church, and in its attitude toward the state as servant of the church in prohibiting "false" religions. That the Catholic Church has followed these principles there can be no doubt. It has put forth intensive efforts in so-called Protestant countries, and with respect to Russia, Catholic bishops and the Vatican have been very articulate in attacking Soviet limitations on religious propaganda work. At the same time, in so-called Catholic countries, Protestant work has been hampered in many ways, both by Catholics themselves, and by civil authorities who yield easily to Catholic pressure. Dr. John Mackay, who has written an excellent foreword to this book, stated recently that in Spain under Franco, 160 out of 162 Protestant churches have been closed, whereas under the Republic they had enjoyed relative freedom. The American Bible Society reported that a hugh shipment of Protestant Bibles had been burned in Madrid. When Italy entered Ethiopia, Protestant natives were denied religious liberty and their missionaries were driven out. In Latin America, as Dr. Howard points out, handicaps to Prot-

estant work have been severe. In one instance, roving bands of Catholic youth, with the full knowledge of priest and police, made a regular practice of breaking up Protestant meetings.

It is obvious that there is a conflict here not only between Catholic and Protestant conceptions of religious liberty, but between Catholic and democratic conceptions as well. It is a sad fact that the Protestant Reformation never reached Latin America, and democracy there has been extremely hampered from the start. Thus while all the Latin American republics have religious liberty written into their constitutions, only 11 of the 20 have separation of church and state; and local officials too often conveniently forget what their national constitutions proclaim.

An alternative title to this book might have been "Is Latin America Catholic?" Dr. Howard quotes a Catholic report from Chile to the effect that only 10 per cent of the people attend mass on Sundays and feast days, and only 50 per cent have their marriages blessed by the church. To a degree it is Catholicism that is the "imported" religion, for in Chile almost half of the priests are foreign-born, chiefly Italians and Spaniards, while practically all the funds for Protestant work in Chile are raised among the Chileans themselves! Among the 50 men in the College of Cardinals, only one represents Latin America. Women are often thought to be the bulwark of the church, yet when woman suffrage came to Uruguay, it was not the Catholic party that benefited, but rather the liberal and leftist parties. Repeatedly the Jesuits and other orders have been driven from certain Latin American countries. The 15 million Indians have hardly been reached. Hosts of industrial workers in the large cities, seeing the church arrayed on the side of privilege, have deserted it. The students and the educated classes—the leadership group—have in great numbers thrown over their religion as obscurantist. The Roman Catholic Church is quite plainly pursuing a "dog-in-the-manger" policy—unable to win the continent, and unwilling to allow others to try. The irony is that Catholics have prospered better in non-Catholic countries: in the United States there is one priest for every 3,750 people—a higher percentage than in Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru.

Protestants and all persons of democratic convictions are justly concerned about the power of clericalism in Catholic countries, for the development of the Church into a self-seeking political bloc almost invariably brings all religion into disrepute, and has historically frustrated the democratic strivings of the common people. A Spanish commission visiting Peru was pleased to find Franco's photograph prominently displayed in every monastery and convent. A former president of the Spanish Bar Association, a sincere Catholic but not a Franco sympathizer, said: "In Argentina . . . the fascists are Catholics and they fight liberty and democracy . . . they are mainly defenders of privilege." Meanwhile the State Department of the world's largest so-called Protestant and democratic nation goes on playing favorites with the Latin American clericalists; the hierarchy becomes more entrenched, and the common people and their leaders become more distrustful of the United States.

The imperative need is more Protestant missions and a re-discovery of democracy by the State Department. For the first there is hope, but for the second—?

PAUL H. STREICH

FIGHTING LIBERAL, *Autobiography of George W. Norris.* $3.50.

George W. Norris was one of the great progressive leaders of American politics in the past four decades. This autobiography is disappointing in the sense that it gives few new insights or new information on the interesting history of our era in which Norris was so intimately involved. But the quality of the story which makes it so disappointing also throws an interesting light upon the character of the author. It reveals him as an almost incredibly simple soul whose complete honesty and courage in politics is drawn from the very simplicity of his character. Norris was able to arrive at right answers to the most complex issues of social justice, not by any great skill in weighing the various factors involved in the issues but the resources of a pure conscience which merely inquired into the most obvious questions of honesty and dishonesty involved in an issue. By the power of the same simplicity Norris was incapable of yielding to the various forms of pressure to which politicians are subjected.

The Scriptural injunction to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves achieves an almost new meaning in the life of Norris. For it becomes apparent that it is possible to derive the wisdom of the serpent from the harmlessness of the dove.

R. N.

HUMAN NATURE, THE MARXIAN VIEW, *by Vernon Venable.* $3.00. Alfred Knopf.

Professor Venable has given us one of the most thoughtful and illuminating studies of Marxist thought which has been published in recent years. While he deals with the whole range of Marxist estimates of human nature he is particularly concerned with the central issue of the seeming contradiction between the Marxist determinism, which seems to make man merely the product of social forces, and its challenge to historic responsibility which implies that man has the freedom to make this responsibility meaningful.

The author illumines this seeming contradiction, which is really a very old philosophical problem, from many angles. He recognizes that the Marxist emphasis lies upon determinism. He writes: "Whatever their ultimate view of the universe the (Marxist) man bears unmistakable marks of the determined being. He is a creature of specific, concrete and scientifically ascertainable causes, whether or not these causes be ultimately metaphysical." Nevertheless Marxists are no simple determinists, as the author also clearly recognizes. It is surprising, in fact, how clearly they apprehend the paradox of fate and freedom, considering the strong deterministic presuppositions.

If space permitted it would be valuable to trace the author's analysis of the various facets of Marxist thought. But it is enough to say that this is a book worth buying and reading because it deals with fundamental issues with an open mind and a profound understanding of the meaning of the issues.

R. N.

ARE MEN EQUAL? *by Henry Alonzo Myers.* Putnam. $2.50.

Mr. Myers does not believe that there is a "natural law" which guarantees the "natural right of equality." In actual democracy," he declares, "the number of private rights and the meaning of any particular right is determined by the people and not by nature. In the future the right of property will mean what the people think it ought to mean." This would make it appear that the author recognizes only positive law, as enacted by particular states, as the source of political morality. Yet he also believes that the "collapse of the doctrine of natural rights has not left majorities free to do as they please." He believes that the people may appeal from the decision of majorities to "a higher law, namely the axiom of human equality." He does not seem to recognize that the "axiom of human equality" is precisely what is meant by "natural law" in Stoic, Catholic and liberal theory.

Mr. Meyers is dealing with important principles of democratic justice and is on the whole right in rejecting too specific conceptions of the content of natural law. But he seems to be uninformed of the whole history of the ideas which underlie our modern problems and there is therefore not much light or leading in his analysis.

R. N.

CHAPLAIN PASCHAL D. FOWLKES

We regret to record the death of one of the members of our Fellowship, Chaplain Paschal D. Fowlkes, who was killed on March 24th in Germany. Chaplain Fowlkes, who was a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, was Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, McLean, Virginia, when he entered the Chaplaincy in June 1942. He served with a troop carrier command in Africa and Sicily and was transferred to a paratrooper command in the summer of 1944. It was in a paratroop operation over the Rhine that he lost his life. Chaplain Fowlkes was a young man of great spiritual integrity, who embodied the highest traditions of the Christian ministry. His friends in the Fellowship and the Church mourn his loss and express their gratitude to God for the Christian witness of his life.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

John Bennett is Professor of Theology and Ethics in Union Theological Seminary.

H. F. Lovell Cocks, M.A., D.D., is Principal of Western College, a Congregational college associated with Bristol University. His recent books include *By Faith Alone* and *The Non-Conformist Conscience.*

We are happy to have this estimate of the social thought of British Nonconformity from Dr. Cocks. In the next issue we will present a similar estimate of the social thought of Protestantism in Ireland.

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